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"SHORT-BALLOT CHARTER FAVORED BY BUSINESSMEN AT PUBLIC HEARING"

Hall of Representatives crowded, and Varied Ideas Expressed
—Majority Believe Present Charter Needs Radical Revision
—Murray Alone Defends Convention's Proposal

Members of the Oahu houselegis-
lature predicted last night that dele-
gation, which consists of 12 would
split seven and five for and against
the "convention charter." This the
charter vigorously opposed the
civic bodies. The prediction that
the five Democrats will vote with
Representatives Andrews and Barrett
in favor of the convention charter,
and the remaining five Republic will
vote against it.

Businessmen by the score crowded
the hall of representatives tonight
and heard straight from the auditor
talk concerning proposals for new
city charter.

Speakers generally gave only
adverse criticism to the "convention
charter" fathered by Representative
Lorrin Andrews in the bill which
occasioned the public hearing. They
also generally indorse the
"short ballot" form of government.

City officials made some deep of
the present charter and the 14 of
supervisors but simultaneous sym-
plified the faults of the system under
which they are operating.

Radical changes in the posed
new city charter for Honolulu now
before the house in the form H. B.
13, were proposed to the members
of the Oahu delegation, to whom the
bill has been referred, at the public
hearing. These changes consist of
amendments to the bill prepared by
the Chamber of Commerce and moved
by many of the leading civic, com-
mercial and other organizations.

Last night's meeting brought a
score or more of varying opinions
to the charter in its present form.
Many speakers favored the amend-
ments of the Chamber of Commerce.
Still others spoke in favor of man-
agerial and commission forms of
government.

Fear Favors Short Ballot
The chamber amendments were
presented by ex-Governor W. F.
Fear who, in a clean-cut address,
pointed out his ideas regarding the
good results that could be obtained
by the adoption of these amendments.
He pointed out that few matters could
come before the legislature as
great importance as the city charter
question, supplementing his address
with sincere praise of the short ballot
system. He asserted that, during the
last 15 years, about 400 or 500 im-
portant cities have adopted the short
ballot system and that this system
is being adopted by about 75,000
other cities a year. The man-
agerial system embodied in the short
ballot, he said, are the comparatively few cities

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my hands on the wall, then down the
steps, then down the stairs. The doctor
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live to see my new home. My
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to try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable
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good results. I did so, my weakness
disappeared. I gained in strength and
moved into our new home. I did all
kinds of garden work, shoveling dirt,
digging and cement work, and raised
hundreds of chickens and ducks. I
cannot say enough in praise of Lydia E.
Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and
if these facts are useful to you, please
publish them for the benefit of other
women."—Mrs. M. O. JOHNSTON, Route
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officers, and the centering of all the
powers of the city and county in such
few.

"By having a few elective officers
and making them important," said
Judge Frear, "capable people will be
more willing to run for office. They
will not be hampered by a veto from
above or by elective officers below
over whom they have no control. They
will be the whole thing and they will
be in a position to do things. They do
not get the blame if things go wrong
unless they are to blame. They can
avoid blame by doing things."

Voters Can Be Trusted

"This is no 'silk-stocking' method
of government for the purpose of get-
ting in the so-called 'better element.'
The voters can be trusted to elect
men who are in touch with the people,
and not the so-called 'highbrows.'"

"Under the amendments it is pro-
vided that only the board of super-
visors be elected, and one or two other
officers, an auditor and a mayor.
The mayor would be elected from
among the supervisors themselves. We
give the mayor the right to vote but
not the power to veto. We believe
he should be one of the board of su-
pervisors with power concentrated in
that board."

"We propose that the mayor be
elected at large, that there be three
supervisors from the fourth and three
from the fifth, and that the auditor be
elected at large. It is further pro-
vided that the supervisors shall appoint
all heads of departments and that they
in turn appoint their assistants."

"This is a serious matter. To carry
the present city charter further in
the same direction would be a mis-
take, if it is found to be unsatisfactory.
Why not give this new system a trial?
Then it will be possible to compare it."

Whitney Favors Business Government

Circuit Judge William L. Whitney
spoke emphatically in favor of the
short ballot system and of the amend-
ments as proposed by the chamber.
He declared the short ballot to be the
only real business system. And the
government, he added, is a thing that
every citizen wants to run as a business
proposition.

Citing the working of a large cor-
poration with its board of directors,
Judge Whitney said that exactly the
same proposition is illustrated when it
comes to city government. He said
he thought that the selection of the
officers of the city should be left to
the supervisors.

G. W. Smith pointed out that the en-
tire charter proposition had been very
carefully considered by the chamber
of commerce, and that the recommen-
dations made by Judge Frear in the
amendments was the consensus of
opinion of the chamber. He declared
that the power of appointment of sub-
ordinate officers should lie with the
supervisors.

Make Responsibility Clear

"The main point," he added, "is to
put the powers in the hands of men
that can be held responsible to the vot-
ers in the appointment of these offi-
cers, leaving them to select the men
who would perform the actual manual
operations. These amendments are not
offered as a critical sense. We have
endeavored to enlist your aid to assist
us in obtaining the best form of pro-
gressive city government for Honolulu."

Murray Defends Convention Charter

Harry E. Murray, manager of the
water department, defended the con-
vention charter bill, saying that, to
some extent, he believed in the short
ballot.

"I am accused of being the man for
whom this charter was made," he
said.

Present Charter Criticized

He wanted to know if the voters
wanted to have supervisors who would
spend only an hour a day in the in-
terest of city government. It is im-
possible under the present system to
get anywhere, he declared. "If I want
something," he added, "I cannot ap-
pear before the board. I have to put
the matter before a certain designated
supervisor. In that way we get no-
where. Subordinates are given no
chance to talk to the board. I say
that the responsibility has got to be
fixed somewhere."

"What we lack here is city pride,"
Murray continued. "Unless you abol-
ish the frontage tax, the superinten-
dent of city works is nothing more
than a construction engineer." He de-
clared himself in favor of the man-
agerial form of government, adding that
the sooner the city begins work along
this line the better it will be for all
concerned.

Logan Opposes City Division

Supervisor Daniel Logan said he was
opposed to dividing the city. He de-
clared that, by dividing the fourth
and fifth districts, a system is evolved
that will not work well.

"The machinery of the city and
county works well," he said, "in spite
of all that is said. There may be a
little friction but there is bound to be
friction for a time in every business
enterprise. I think that our ballot is
comparatively short. I do not think
the present system should be tampered
with. No better work could be done
than is now being done in the present
board of supervisors."

Achi is for Amendments

W. C. Achi asserted that the public
wants a change and that he could see
no other way except the one proposed
by Judge Frear. If the voters continue
to elect the supervisors as they do
now, he added, the expenses of the
government will continue to increase.
He went further to say that the pro-
posed law is not the act of the chart-
er convention, as only 27 members of
the convention voted for the charter
when it passed third reading.

Sees Defects of Present Charter
W. O. Smith said that the city gov-

ernment of Honolulu is now on trial,
and that it has defects apparent to
every thinking man. It has not at-
tained the results that it was ex-
pected to, he added. "There is something
wrong, he asserted, of the results
would be different."

"We are growing in our relations to
the federal government and to other
countries," he said, "and we should
test it or duty to remedy
these defects."

Puts Power with Supervisors

A. Lewis, Jr., said that the meat of
the whole discussion centered about
the amendments to the present char-
ter regarding the election of officers. In-
stead, as the power is centered in
the board of supervisors, with the
board setting the policy and the mayor
following it out.

"If the supervisors demand retrench-
ment, they will get it," he said. "Un-
der the present system an officer is
not obliged to bow to the dictates of
the board."

Efficiency What is Required

Wallace R. Farrington said he does
not understand that the present char-
ter comprises giving Honolulu the
managerial form of government.

"We are striving for the best," he
said. "We want good roads and good
administration. I have seen exhibi-
tions of officials passing the buck here
for the last several years. The pre-
sent form of city government has been
a distinct failure. It seems to me
that this new charter is simply going
to repeat the state of affairs."

"This is a crisis in the affairs of
the city and county of Honolulu. Our
plant is all shot to pieces. Our roads
are all gone, they were improperly
built. The water and sewer systems
are inadequate. If that isn't a crisis
I don't know what is. This calls for
a business reorganization. There can
be no greater calamity to a business
than the decay of its plant. That is
what has been going on here with our
government. We must get in and do
something for ourselves."

Rotary Club for Amendments

Speaking for the Rotary Club, Ed
Towse declared in favor of the amend-
ments presented by Judge Frear. John
Effinger, representing the Ad. Club,
said that organization favored the
short ballot and wanted to see it tried
out.

Supervisor F. M. Hatch took the
floor in defense of the present city
administration, declaring that the
present form of charter is the best
Honolulu could have. It tends to a
business-like handling of every propo-
sition, he added, and "I think more
of the man who is in politics for what
he can get out of it than the man who
stays home and knocks."

Committee Will Caucus Tonight

The members of the Oahu dele-
gation expect to meet at 7:30 o'clock
this evening for their first caucus on
the city charter.

Briefly, the provisions in the Cham-
ber of Commerce amendments are
these:

The board of supervisors shall con-
sist of a mayor and six supervisors,
the mayor to be the chief officer of
the board.
Elective officers shall be a mayor,
six supervisors and an auditor, the
mayor and auditor elected at large,
with three supervisors from each dis-
trict.

The elective officers hold office for
four years. But at the general elec-
tion in 1917 the two supervisors re-
ceiving the lowest votes in the fourth
district, and the two receiving the
lowest number in the fifth, shall hold
office for two years.

Appointive officers shall be a city
and county clerk, treasurer, city at-
torney, sheriff and superintendent of
city works.

One section outlines very fully the
power of the supervisors to impeach
any officer guilty of malfeasance in
office. Such officer shall be informed
of the charge and given every oppor-
tunity to defend himself.

The appointive officers shall have
the power to remove any employees
under them.

The amendments strike out sections
65 and 66 of the bill, relating to
"power of appointments" and "pres-
ent of the board of supervisors."

Many Representative Men Attend

Those who attended the hearing in-
cluded former Governor Frear, C. R.
Hemenway, F. C. Atherton, J. M. Mc-
Chesney, W. O. Smith, R. C. Brown,
Capt. Henri Berger, Norman Watkins,
W. C. Achi, W. R. Farrington, Su-
pervisors Robert Horner, Daniel Logan
and F. M. Hatch, Mayor Lane, Riley
H. Allen, A. Lewis, Jr., Judge W. L.
Whitney, A. F. Wall, H. E. Vernon,
W. H. McClellan, Senators Baldwin
and Chillingworth, E. A. Berndt, J. J.
Lightfoot, Dr. A. F. Jackson, J. M.
Young, J. N. S. Williams, G. F. Bush,
George P. Denison, Eugene Aiu, W. L.
Howard, F. J. Lowrey, F. D. Lowrey,
Harry E. Murray, W. G. Hall, J. T.
Warren, J. A. Rath, E. O. White,
George Waterhouse, F. T. P. Water-
house, James Steiner, W. T. Garden,
Ed Towse, John Effinger, J. F. Child,
F. Q. Cannon, H. L. Kerr, C. H. Klue-
gel, H. F. Wichman, W. H. McInery,
John F. Soper and numerous others.

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CHAMBER FAVORS SHORT BALLOT

Amendments to the convention
charter now before the legislature
were indorsed Wednesday afternoon
by the members of the Chamber of
Commerce at a special meeting. The
principal amendment was for a short
ballot which would practically give the
city a commission form of govern-
ment. The amendments were drawn
by the legislative committee of the
chamber and followed closely the
changes in government incorporated
in the report of a joint committee com-
posed of representatives from the
Chamber of Commerce, Civic Federa-
tion, Rotary Club, Commercial Club
and Ad. Club.

The first speaker was W. F. Frear
who outlined the many advantages
which would result from a short bal-
lot form of government. He pointed
out that with only the board of super-
visors and mayor elected and all
heads of departments appointed by
them, the authority would be con-
centrated in the board and responsibility
fixed.

Under the amendments there are to
be six supervisors with the mayor also
elected as a check on the board.
Three supervisors are to be elected
from each district and serve four
years, half retiring every two years.
There is no provision for a recall but
a system of impeachment by the su-
pervisors on a petition signed by 100
voters is suggested. Vacancies in elec-
tive offices are not to be filled until
an election occurs.

In the discussion which followed
several suggestions were made.
W. O. Smith said that idealism in
government should not be the present
aim but to bolster up the weak spots
and change the worse evils.

J. C. Cohen was particularly in
favor of appointing the superintendent
of city works as he should be respon-
sible to the board more than the
voters.

President Smith of the chamber
urged every member to get out and
fight for the amendments indorsed.

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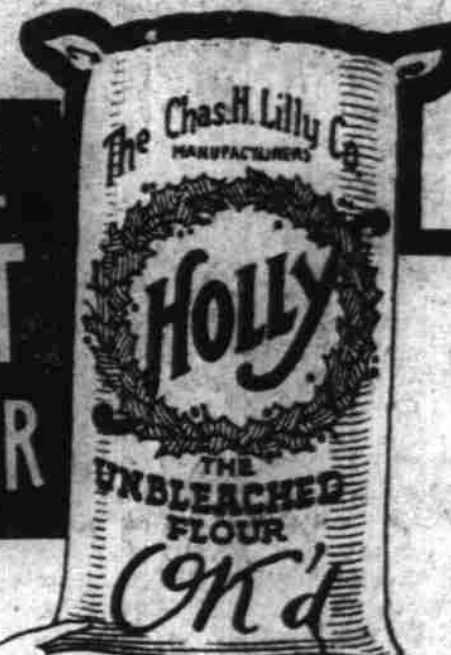
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